




CITY AND COUNTY OF NORWICH.

SUMMARY
OF
ANNUAL REPORT
OF
THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH.

For the War Year 1918.

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Summary of Annual Report.

TO THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE
NORWICH URBAN SANITARY AUTHORITY.

MY LORD MAYOR AND GENTLEMEN,

In accordance with the practice followed during the War, I do not submit the detailed Report for 1918 but this abstracted summary of it.

The General Register Office having advised that the civil population, in calculating mortality returns, should be estimated at 107,245; *death rates* are based on that figure; *birth rates* being calculated on a population estimated by the G.R.O. at 120,164.

The birth rate for the year, calculated on the figures supplied by the G.R.O., was 16·03 per 1000 of the population *at all ages*—and is fractionally higher than it was in 1917 when the birth rate was 16 per 1000.

The *gross recorded death rate*, 20·5 per 1000 of the population of all ages, is considerably higher than that for 1917, viz., 14·0 per 1000. Measles and Influenza contributed markedly to it.

The *infantile mortality rate*, 106 per 1000 *births*, compares unfavourably with that (96) for 1917, epidemic disease affecting this also. Of the infants born there was a male majority of 147. 173 of the infants born were illegitimate, 8 more than in 1917 when this figure was 165 (and out of these 173 infants 35 died under one year), so that, the relative proportion was higher, viz., 8·97 per cent of the total births, compared with $8\frac{1}{2}$ per cent in 1917. The special infantile mortality rate amongst the illegitimate was 202·3 *per 1000 births*, whilst that of the legitimately born was 96·3 *per 1000 births*. The necessity for increased supervision and care of illegitimate offspring is made painfully obvious by the figures recorded, which would have been even higher than they are but for the efforts made by the Health Visitors, and by the Norwich Guild of Help for Girls (Hon. Sec. Mrs. Whitty, 17, The Crescent), a Society deserving to be more generously supported; its methods are tactful, humane, and unobtrusive, whilst its work, to my thinking, cannot easily be praised too highly.

The *zymotic death rate*, 5·6 per 1000 is 9 times higher than that (0·6) for 1917 (Measles and Influenza), the *special death rate for diarrhoeal diseases up to 2 years of age*, which the Local Government Board asks us separately to record, 9·61 per 1000 births, is much lower than that (15·5) for 1917.

During the year the Health Visitors (who also act as School Nurses) paid 16,464 visits and re-visits to dwellings—2600 in connection with medical inspections of school children in the schools. At their suggestion 130 houses and 316 persons were cleansed, 6 of the latter compulsorily. Of the *newly-born* infants 1253 of the 1619 visited, or 77 per cent., were being fed from the breast at the time of the visit (10-12th day); 344 of the infants were ailing at the time of the first visit, or roughly

1 in 5·6—an improvement on the 1917 proportion (1 in 5·5). 76 of the mothers were reported as being “badly nourished”—the number in 1917 having been 47. (To these, on my recommendation, the Sick Poor Society gave its highly valued help). Bad methods of feeding were changed for better ones in 290 instances. 31 still-births were notified (and specially reported on) and the birth of 20 sets of twins. 552 infants were fed wholly or partially on *dried milk powder* supplied from my department—these babies being seen at the Infant Welfare Centre, and weighed at intervals, with on the whole encouraging results—in some instances with quite remarkable results. Of the dwellings visited, those with one bedroom only (8·7 per cent.) contained *averaged* populations of 3·7 persons at all ages; those having two bedrooms (34·2 per cent.) 4·8 persons at all ages or 2·4 per bedroom; those with three bedrooms (49·0 per cent.) 5·4 persons at all ages, or 1·8 per bedroom; those with four bedrooms (6·4 per cent.) 5·3 persons at all ages, or 1·3 per bedroom; 1·7 per cent. of the dwellings visited contained more than four bedrooms.

The Maternity and Infant Welfare Centre established on the ground floor of the old Eye Infirmary, Pottergate Street, has continued to be very successful; as many as 82 infants being brought on one occasion; apart from its intrinsic desirability I have seriously to consider the necessity of holding more clinics, if only to avoid relative crowding; but it is not possible definitely to decide upon final arrangements until I know where we shall be quartered. (Dr. Margaret Boileau again has generously given most valuable help gratuitously). I hope, later, vastly to extend the maternity side of the service. Arrangements have been made for pre-natal consultations, with a skilled obstetrician, and for the admission of certain cases to the Maternity Institution. I remain the more pleased

to record the success which has been secured, because it has been so quietly and unobtrusively acquired. There has been no attempt to obtain adventitious notoriety, no baby shows, "pram parades," etc., etc., for which I still entertain a distrust only measurable by an inexpressible disdain.

Tuberculous Diseases.—During the year the total number of notifications which reached me was 211:—160 of tuberculosis of the lungs (Phthisis) and 51 of other forms of the disease. (In 1917 the corresponding figures were 116 and 28). To these cases 1658 visits were made by officers of the Public Health Department. Of the total numbers, 54 per cent. were males, 46 females; 43 per cent. married, 49 single; 1 per cent. widows or widowers and the others under marriageable age. In the 180 cases specially reported on, there was evidence of tuberculous taint in the family history of 52, and 58 had received either hospital or sanatorium treatment; 148 were insured; 105 had a separate bedroom, 16 a separate bed in a room occupied jointly with another, and 59 shared a bed with another person; 26 of the men and 14 of the women were engaged in boot factories. 16 other women were householders, and 60 men discharged soldiers; and there were 7 school children (2 boys and 5 girls). There were 157 deaths from Phthisis, and 56 from other forms of tuberculous disease. 14 in the Norfolk and Norwich Hospital, 25 in the Union Infirmary, 4 in the Isolation Hospital, and 7 in the Jenny Lind Infirmary. In the Union Infirmary 69 cases were admitted during the year, and on January 1st, 1919, there were 29 Phthisical patients remaining under treatment.

Notification of Infectious Diseases.—34 cases of Cerebro-Spinal Fever (28 of them soldiers) with 14 deaths—(10 soldiers). 293 of Diphtheria (54 of them soldiers), with 17 deaths. 146 of

Scarlet Fever (8 of them soldiers), with 2 deaths; 3232 of Measles and German Measles (21 of them soldiers), with 153 deaths; 1 Puerperal Fever; 26 of Erysipelas, with 3 deaths; 11 of Enteric Fever (1 of them a soldier), with 3 deaths; 140 of Chicken Pox (1 a soldier), with no deaths; 22 of Ophthalmia Neonatorum (31 in 1917); 1 Paratyphoid and 3 mixed infections; there were 26 deaths from Whooping Cough; 8 from Diarrhœa (3 under 1 year of age), 373 from Influenza, and 4 from Tetanus. There were also 68 deaths attributed to other *septic diseases* (peritonitis, cellulitis, etc.), (32 in the Norfolk and Norwich Hospital), and 181 to *malignant* (cancerous) growths—4 more than in 1917.

The total number of cases of infectious disease *admitted to the Isolation Hospital* was 527 (24 less than in 1917), and as there were 70 *in the Hospital* on January 1st, 1918, the total number treated was 597 (13 more than in 1917). The cases admitted included 133 with Scarlet Fever; 252 with Diphtheria; 7 with Enteric; 28 with Cerebro-Spinal Fever, chiefly soldiers; 4 with *mixed infections*, and 75 with other diseases—Measles, G. Measles, Mumps, Tubercle, &c. The total number of deaths was 38 distributed as follows:—Scarlet Fever 1, Diphtheria 14, Enteric Fever 1, Phthisis 4, Cerebro-Spinal Fever 11, Mixed Infection 1, other diseases 6. The *average daily number of patients* was 51 (maximum 106, minimum 30); and the *average length of stay* for all diseases was 29·6—less than in 1917 (*viz.*, 32·3). On December 31st, 1918, 36 patients remained under treatment; 4 members of the staff contracted Diphtheria, and 1 Scarlet Fever—all recovering satisfactorily. In the Hospital Laboratory 9 “*widal*” tests were made, 166 examinations for tubercle, and 2246 swabs were examined chiefly from Diphtheria “*contacts*.” 929 certificates of freedom from infection were issued to school

children, "contacts," &c., to enable the recipients to resume attendance at school, or work.

In April, 1917, a Clinic for the gratuitous diagnosis and treatment of Venereal Diseases was established at the Norfolk and Norwich Hospital, and has steadily been developing. Lectures on Venereal Diseases were given during the year to large numbers of workpeople, etc.

Midwives' Act.—There were 20 midwives on our register for 1918, 5 of them (not practising) Health Visitors, and 6 connected with the Maternity Institution. Miss Hatton, C.M.B., the Inspector of Midwives, maintained a constant supervision over the midwives practising in the city with very satisfactory results.

Factory and Workshops' Act.—56 Inspections of factories and workshops, and 7 defects reported on and remedied; 131 lists of outworkers were sent in, 95 of them twice, and 215 inspections of outworkers' premises were made. We found work being done on unsatisfactory premises (Section 108), but in none of the cases did we find it necessary to issue formal notices, the defects being remedied voluntarily. Infectious disease occurred in out-workers' dwellings (Sections 109-110), but in these cases also verbal representations only were required. The total number of workshops on the register was 566, and of factories, 437. There remained 3 underground bakeries (Section 101), in use at the end of the year. In 3 instances the Inspector of Factories referred nuisances remediable under the Public Health Acts, but not under the Factory and Workshops Act.

Food and Drugs Act.—227 samples were purchased, and submitted for analysis (5 of the milks to bacteriological investigation for tubercle bacilli), 184 of the samples were certified to be genuine, and 43 to be adulterated (42 of milk, and 1 of coffee). In 27 cases taken before the Magistrates fines varying from £10 to 10/- were imposed in 26 instances; 14 vendors were written to and cautioned, and in 1 case no proceedings were taken.

The report of the Chief Sanitary Inspector, summarized, shows that 2115 nuisances were detected, 4163 re-inspections made of premises, 2209 “special” complaints attended to, 784 rooms disinfected, and 3976 visits paid to courts and yards; that there are 34 slaughter-houses, and that to these 1718 visits have been paid; that the markets have been regularly visited and inspected; that 41 carcasses of beef, 34 of pork, 52 of mutton, 10 of veal, and 29 of lamb were among the 1100 odd items, or collections of unsound food destroyed; that water taken from wells proved “passable”; that there are 57 cowsheds on the register with 500 cows; 17 dairies and 118 milk-shops; that the common lodging-houses have been visited weekly; that 240 visits were paid to houses let in lodgings; that 66 inspections were made of caravans, 36 smoke observations taken, and 44 inspections made under the Shops Act (1912-1913); 269 special visits paid to piggeries and 346 to bake-houses; that 574 inspections were made of premises in connection with the Margarine Act; that 1139 loads of privy bin refuse were removed by the night waggons, and 22,247 loads of house refuse by the day (14,792 loads of refuse were sent by wherry from the Fishergate wharf).

The Norwich Corporation Act, 1889, and the Public Health Amendment Act, 1890, the Public Health Acts Amendment

Acts, 1907, are the general adoptive Acts in force in the district.

The presence in the city, during many months of the year, of large numbers of troops, necessarily has added to our duties, especially in connection with the preparation of food (alike for soldiers here and elsewhere), supervision of the sanitary condition of billets and the prevention of infectious illness. And it is only fitting that I again affirm that every member of the Public Health Department has worked cheerfully and efficiently, and coped successfully with all emergencies. These added labours have been rendered the more acceptable (apart altogether from our irrepressible patriotism) by the cordial relationships which have been maintained between these sojourners in our midst and ourselves, and have all been directed to the sanitary ordering and well-governing of our people.

(Signed)

H. C. PATTIN.

May 1st, 1919.

P.S.—The matters of importance in the foregoing abstract and summary are :—

- (a) The higher death rate (due chiefly to Measles).
- (b) The slight heightening in the birth rate.
- (c) Relative and absolute increase in births of illegitimate children.
- (d) The higher gross infantile mortality rate.

- (e) The higher infantile mortality rate for illegitimate children.
- (f) Decrease in cases of Ophthalmia Neonatorum.
- (g) 1 more case of Cerebro-Spinal Fever (civil population).
- (h) Decrease of Diphtheria and increase of Measles (civil population).
- (i) Decrease in Scarlet and Enteric Fevers (civil population).
- (j) Decrease in Diarrhœa, increase of Whooping Cough, and Phthisis.
- (k) Progressive success of, and at, Infant Welfare Centre.
- (l) Progress at Clinic for treatment of Venereal Diseases.
- (m) Epidemic of Measles (first 6 months).
- (n) Commencing epidemic of Influenza (end of year).

